PUBLIC LANDS

STATEMENT OF BASIC PHILOSOPHY
NACo, its Western Interstate Region, state associations of counties, and individual county governments have a critical role in policy development, planning, and management of federal land.

The federal government has long recognized and accepted that federal land holdings are a burden on local governments, and that funding is necessary for local governments to provide the types of services needed to access and use those lands.

NACo believes that environmental and socioeconomic values must be balanced and supports a philosophy of management that allows diversity of activities on public lands and local economies. Federal agencies must coordinate their management of public lands consistent with local land use plans or management policies.

FEDERAL LAND MANAGEMENT

A. Transfer of Public Lands: NACo believes all fifty states are equal and that every state should receive everything that was promised to them in their enabling acts, including land transfers, if requested by an individual state with consultation with the affected counties.

B. Federal Land Ownership: Federal real property holdings should be appropriately managed. Congress should provide adequate and appropriate funding to support staffing, maintenance, research, and operational needs of the federal land management agencies. Acquisition of new land by any federal agency should be subject to consultation with the county in which the land is located. Extension of jurisdiction outside established management area boundaries such as integral vistas or buffer zones should meet the same criteria.

Criteria for the transfer, sale or acquisition of public lands shall include consideration of fair market value, consultation with appropriate counties and jurisdictions, and public values.

Counties should be fully involved as affected partners in any process to consider the disposal, transfer or purchase of public lands or acquisition of private lands to become public within a county’s jurisdiction, and counties should be given the opportunity to participate in the development of terms and conditions of any such proposal before it is carried out. Additionally, NACo requests that federal land management agencies adopt policies that provide real and substantial consideration of historic uses in project plans and environmental documentation, and commit project developers to providing mitigation for their loss.

C. Special Use Designations: Congress and federal agencies shall consult and confer with affected counties as early as possible when considering special land use designations that impact the use and status of public lands. Counties should be fully involved in the drafting and development of any bills pertaining to wilderness designation within any affected county’s jurisdiction. Public hearings must be held in the counties affected by the proposed designation. There must be compliance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

NACo opposes legislative efforts to require inventoried roadless areas (USDA Forest Service) to be managed in accordance with the 2001 Roadless Area Rule (January 12, 2001). NACo opposes federal land management agency actions that limit access and multiple use of lands that otherwise would be available to the public (i.e. defacto wilderness). NACo opposes Executive Branch efforts to designate de facto wilderness, or federal restrictions not explicitly enacted on use of public or private lands in proximity to a designated wilderness or a Wilderness Study Area without congressional approval. NACo also supports amending the Antiquities Act to provide transparency and accountability in the designation of national monuments. Federal consultation with state, county, and tribal government should be required prior to the development and designation of any national monument.
D. Access: NACo supports maintaining and enhancing public access to public lands; and opposes road closures, road decommissioning, moratoria against road building and other limiting policies and practices without coordination and consistency with county land use plans or management policies.

NACo recognizes the importance of the system of roads and rights-of-way across federal lands established under R.S. 2477. The current Administration does not have authority to make binding administrative determinations about county R.S. 2477 rights. Instead, the Administration should work cooperatively with local officials to obtain Judicial or Congressional recognition of county 2477 rights-of-way claims on federal land. This road recognition process should be clear and consistent and give high priority to public safety, private property, and public access. We oppose any federal action designed to change or diminish the scope of these rights.

E. Water: NACo believes in state primacy in water resources administration, management, and allocation. Before any decision is made to continue drawdowns, removal or breaching of dams, a full review of all the relevant scientific and socioeconomic implications of such actions should be made and affected counties consulted.

NACo supports changes in current federal policy to provide the option to use mechanized equipment for maintenance of dams within designated Wilderness areas and Wilderness Study Areas (WSA).

NACo urges the U.S. government to acknowledge the importance of adopting definitive Arctic policies in order to protect national security and to further U.S. commerce.

F. Domestic Livestock Grazing: NACo supports the enhancement of a viable rangeland livestock industry as an essential component of our country’s economy and as vital to affected communities. Good grazing practices are beneficial to maintaining rangeland health and assist in reducing potential fire danger by keeping fuel loading to a manageable level.

NACo supports the development and implementation of alternative grazing allotment management procedures including categorical exclusions for “no change of use permit” renewals on transfers to streamline the process and reduce cost to the taxpayer associated with rangeland management decisions.

NACo expresses disapproval of certain civil actions brought against the livestock industry and federal land management agencies that are intended solely to prevent livestock grazing on public lands when final decisions are made by the appropriate federal agency regarding grazing allotments after cooperative efforts to determine best land-use practices have been made.

NACo opposes legislative efforts to allow for the permanent retirement of grazing permits through the buy out of grazing permits by non-ranching third parties.

G. Wild Horse and Burro Management: NACo urges support for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in its management of wild horse and burro populations to achieve appropriate management levels (AML) as authorized by the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971 (as amended). Further, NACo supports the sale, adoption or humane slaughter of excess animals as viable options to achieve populations consistent with established appropriate management levels.

H. Mineral, Oil, and Gas Development: NACo supports comprehensive mineral, gas, and oil development laws that address the needs of the extraction industries, the affected counties, and the environment. NACo recognizes that U.S. independence from foreign oil also requires expanded alternative and renewable resources. Federal agencies shall issue permits for mineral, oil, gas, and alternative/renewable energy development on federal land in a timely fashion.

NACo supports the development and implementation of a comprehensive national energy policy, which includes conservation, efficiency, exploration, and research and provides for the domestic production of
traditional and alternative/renewable energy sources. Every effort shall be made by land management agencies to reduce road blocks that require years to get an application to drill, mine or extract minerals from federal land.

I. Forest and Rangeland Health: NACo supports forest health initiatives to address the threat of catastrophic events to our public forest and rangeland resources. Federal land management agencies shall utilize an appropriate mix of management practices, and increased private, local, and state contracts and partnerships for pre-fire management, effective fire suppression, and restoration of federal forest and rangelands. As a goal, NACo supports legislation to direct and enable federal forest management agencies to reduce Fire Regime Condition Class (FRCC 3) to a standard of FRCC 1 in all federal forests by the year 2030, and to reduce FRCC 2 to the standard of FRCC 1 in all federal forests by the year 2050, through means of active landscape scale management, fuels reduction, and immediate post-fire restoration.

J. Noxious Weeds & Invasive Species:
   a. NACo calls for a well-funded, coordinated, integrated weed management approach to noxious weed control. NACo supports an early detection and rapid response approach by all agencies and an accelerated completion of all required environmental documentation to allow the use of all the tools needed to accomplish integrated weed management, i.e. chemical, mechanical, biological, cultural or prevention.
   b. NACo calls on counties to action to better protect Counties from the devastating impacts of invasive species and to do so in a coordinated manner among multiple levels of government. NACo finds that the environmental resources of each county are exceptionally valuable to all citizens, including hydroelectric power, agriculture, forest, water supplies, commercial and recreational fisheries, aquaculture, and outdoor recreation opportunities. NACo supports state and federal legislation that prohibits the transportation of any state or federally-listed invasive species, as well as efficient and effective agency action that stops other pathways of spread.

K. Military Installations: Recognizing the value counties and military installations bring to each other and their complex and sometimes competing needs, NACo supports establishment of open, consistent and long-term joint planning processes to help both communities co-exist and continue to thrive together. Early engagement, close cooperation, and joint coordination of community and military development plans are essential to minimize potential impacts. Affected counties shall be entitled to cooperating agency status for military initiatives under NEPA, while counties shall seek similar input from military installations.

FEDERAL LAND PAYMENTS

A. Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT): NACo supports the full funding of the PILT program at its yearly authorized level and supports legislative and/or administrative efforts to modify the program to make payments to counties on a basis equitable to both the federal and local taxpayer that are non-discriminatory in nature.

Because this program does not compensate counties for military lands that are also exempt from local taxes, a new and separate system of payments-in-lieu-of-taxes should be created for such facilities to compensate the affected counties.

B. Resource Revenue Sharing Payments: Counties must share in the benefits of economic activity on public lands through statutory formulas, which guarantee a percentage of all gross receipts to be returned to the counties where the activity occurs. NACo opposes any attempts to lessen the revenue sharing receipts.

NACo supports amending the Federal Mineral Leasing Act so that an additional five percent from the federal portion (50 percent) of mineral lease revenue is returned to the county from where the mineral was extracted, and the historic balance of the 50/50 split is restored.

NACo supports the sharing of federal leasing and rights-of-way revenues from renewable energy development (wind, solar, and geothermal) and federal Stewardship Contracts on federal lands with county
governments where that development and contracts occurs. Any revenue sharing program should not negatively impact the PILT program.

C. Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act: NACo supports the reauthorization and enhancement of the Secure Rural Schools program (PL 110-343). Reauthorization should maintain coupling between payments to counties and active natural resource management; and the connection between sustainable natural resource management and the stability and well-being of forest counties and communities.

D. Compensation to Counties by Concessionaires Operating on Federal Lands: NACo supports federal policies that direct federal land management agencies to provide that all concessionaires, or enhanced-use-lease lessees who operate businesses on federally owned land, compensate local taxing jurisdictions equal to the property taxes that are otherwise paid by any other commercial business in the county.

FEDERAL LAND USE PLANNING
A. Community-Based Land Management: NACo supports community-based conservation initiatives and calls on the agencies to implement such initiatives. Federal land management agencies should use broad-based vegetation management practices, in conjunction with community-based partnerships for ecosystem management, to enhance the health of the public lands.

B. Endangered Species Act: NACo recognizes the importance of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) as an essential safeguard for America’s fish, wildlife and plants and therefore supports updating and improving it to better achieve its goals.

NACo supports reforming the ESA to mandate that the federal government treat state and county governments as cooperating agencies with full rights of coordination, consultation, and consistency to decide jointly with appropriate federal agencies when and how to list species, designate habitat, and plan and manage for species recovery and de-listing.

C. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Improvement: NACo supports the revision of NEPA to strengthen the involvement of local government in the federal decision-making process, to increase public involvement for local communities, expedite project analysis, and make those decisions in a timely but effective manner. NACo supports requiring federal agencies offer to coordinate with and offer cooperating agency status to local governments, and negotiate mutually agreeable MOUs.

D. Gateway Communities: NACo recognizes counties as gateway communities to our nation’s federal lands and that the economies and ecologies of county, state, and federal governments in gateway regions are interwoven. NACo believes that diverse recreation and tourism opportunities are critical to counties and their communities. Furthermore, NACo recognizes that federal policies frequently drive significant impacts to gateway communities and the services they provide to visitors to ensure their pleasure, safety and comfort.

E. Current Future Federal Land Management Agency Land Management Plan Revisions: Federal Land Management Agencies should coordinate with local government officials and maintain maximum consistency with local plans and policies when undergoing current and future revisions of Resource Management Plans (RMPs) and Forest Management Plans. Counties should be full cooperating agencies in such processes and be provided meaningful opportunity for involvement in the revision process from start to finish. Once land management agency plans are approved management practices or policies, new agency actions should not contradict those plans.

Plans should provide for economic and social sustainability, emphasize multiple use management and commodity production, and require federal decisions be made at the most local level of the federal agency.
PUBLIC LANDS RESOLUTIONS

Resolution on Wild Horse and Burro Management

Issue: Wild Horse and Burro Management

Adopted Policy: NACo supports Congressional legislation to give individual States exclusive authority to manage wild horses and burros on federal lands, including exclusive authority to determine appropriate herd management levels (AMLs) and dispose of animals that exceed AMLs at each State's discretion, just like States do now for other wildlife species.

Approved | July 14, 2014

Resolution on Ending the Sequestration of Shared Mineral Lease Act Revenue to the States and Returning All Sequestered Revenue to the States

Issue: The sequestration of Mineral Lease Act revenue to the States.

Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) supports ending the sequestration of Mineral Lease Act (MLA) revenue to the States and giving back all such sequestered revenue to the States, consistent with the fact that MLA revenue shared with States does not constitute federal budgetary expenditures and should not be subject to mandatory sequestration under the Balanced Budget Emergency Deficit Control Act (BBEDCA) of 1985 as amended.

Approved | July 14, 2014

Resolution Supporting Performance Analysis of BLM Master Leasing Plans

Issue: Many BLM Regional Management Plans (RMPs) are outdated and do not incorporate recent county input that takes into consideration changes in landscapes, economies, multiple uses, populations and local government community needs. In IM-2010-117, BLM was ordered to begin using a Master Leasing Plan process under certain conditions, which was controversial.

NACo Public Lands Steering Committee in 2013, officially opposed the MLP process. However, the MLP process has been implemented in some states and it would be helpful to know if the MLP process is meeting its goals such as more predictability, faster leasing from fewer protests, and if there have been opportunities for increased transparency and county input into the leasing process.

Adopted Policy: NACo supports BLM preparing a performance analysis/status report on the results from implementing IM-2010-117, including comparing post IM-2010-117 leasing results with pre-IM-2010-117 leasing results on elements to include but not limited to: number of parcels leased, public involvement, county government involvement, lease issuance times, post-lease production rates, protest rates, number of stipulations, length of time for processing Master Development Plans (MDPs).

Approved | July 14, 2014

Resolution Urging Congress to Address the Growing U.S. Forest Service Trails Maintenance Backlog

Issue: To promote solutions to reverse the trail maintenance backlog on U.S. national forests that currently impedes recreational access, visitation and recreation-related tourism.
Adopted Policy: NACo should urge Congress to pass legislation to improve and safeguard our rich treasury of national forest trails, as recommended in the March 2014 letter to Congress from over 50 regional and national trail- and recreation-focused organizations.

Approved | July 14, 2014

Resolution Supporting the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act (S. 1875)

Issue: The U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management have been forced to spend increasing proportions of their budgets on wildland fire suppression, diverting critical resources from the very programs designed to prevent fires. To illustrate, the proportion of budgets of the U.S. Forest Service devoted to wildland fire suppression has increased from 13% in 1991 to 41% in 2013. S. 1875 would move any spending above 70% of the 10-year rolling average for fire suppression outside of the agency’s baseline budget by making additional costs eligible to be funded under a separate disaster account.

Adopted Policy: NACo supports S. 1875, the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act, so that the budgets of the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management will have protection of its resources appropriately devoted to hazardous fuel treatments through active management of the federally owned landscape, rather than having those resources drained by wildland fire suppression.

Approved | July 14, 2014

Resolution Supporting Emergency Hazardous Fuels Reduction Projects

Issue: Supporting Emergency Hazardous Fuels Reduction Projects.

Adopted Policy: NACo supports specific components of HR 818, the "Healthy Forest Management and Wildfire Prevention Act," which gives states the authority to identify areas afflicted by the bark beetle epidemic, drought, deteriorating forest health conditions, and high risk of wildfires and to put in place emergency hazardous fuels reduction projects.

Approved | July 14, 2014

Resolution Supporting Increased Funding for Forest Service Infrastructure Maintenance

Issue: Support increased funding for the maintenance of U.S. Forest Service roads.

Adopted Policy: NACo supports increased U.S. Forest Service funding to address the U.S. Forest Service’s infrastructure and maintenance needs.

Approved | July 14, 2014

Resolution Supporting Traditional Receipt Sharing with Counties of Stewardship End Result Contracting Project Authority

Issue: The U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management have renewed legislative authority to enter into stewardship contracts for management of federal forests and rangelands. The reauthorization does not include, however, traditional sharing with counties of revenues generated from these projects.

Adopted Policy: NACo supports stewardship end results contracting projects as a tool to manage federal forests and rangelands, but only if it retains the historical receipts sharing with counties. In this context, the sharing should be based on the gross appraised value of the commodity or product harvested or produced under the contract or agreement.
Resolution on Utilization of Federal Timber after Domestic Declaration of Disaster

Issue: Supporting federal law changes to increase the flow of federal timber for domestic reconstruction purposes (after the declaration of emergency) improves economies and community sustainability.

Adopted Policy: The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act should be amended, specifically sections 307, 315, 316, 323, 421, and 683, to include provisions to require that following a declaration of an emergency production of timber from federal forest lands be expedited. When federal dollars are allocated for disaster relief, changes to these sections would benefit schools, roads, and law enforcement in counties with federal forest lands.

Resolution Supporting Active Federal Forest Management with Bridge Funding

Issue: While counties are deeply grateful for the financial lifeline of the Secure Rural Schools & Community Self-Determination Act (SRS), NACo urges a new direction in management of our federal forests, for the very health of the forests themselves, and for job opportunities and social and economic sustainability. While some form of “bridge funding” to maintain solvency in our counties will be required, particularly given the dominance of federal forest presence in many counties, it must be in concert with a new direction in federal forest management.

Adopted Policy: Legislation that provides bridge funding to forested counties and school districts while economic vitality is restored in these communities is vitally important and essential. Also, for economic vitality, Congress must mandate active sustainable forest management to achieve resilient forestlands managed by the United States government.

Resolution on the Endangered Species Act

Issue: The Endangered Species Act (ESA).

Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) supports legislation

1. Favoring decisions to list plant or animal species as threatened or endangered (T&E listing decisions) that are made through best available science with increased transparency and timelines for decisions;
2. Postponing T&E listing decisions for species in states that have submitted a conservation management plan, giving such states at least a decade to demonstrate that their plans will conserve and recover the species;
3. Encouraging the Secretary of Interior (Secretary) to share critical data, research and scientific information to assist such states in their conservation efforts;
4. Authorizing federal land management agencies to amend their land use plans to comply with and allow such state based conservation efforts;
5. Strengthening the influence of local participation so that local collaboration and/or coordination processes and recommended species management policies are not overridden.
6. Supporting the inclusion of the consideration of the economic impacts to local economies from any species management decisions.
7. Authorizing the ESA to recognize and allow consideration of the predation of threatened or endangered species by natural events, as well as human activities (such as predator impacts and weather-related events).
Resolution Supporting Improved Economic Analysis of the Effects of Critical Habitat Designations under the Endangered Species Act

**Issue:** Need for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (the Service, USFWS) to do an economic analysis that is both cumulative and quantitative when calculating the cost of the declaration of critical habitat pursuant to an Endangered Species Act (ESA) listing.

**Adopted Policy:** The National Association of Counties (NACo) supports legislation that would require the USFWS to perform cumulative and quantitative economic analysis, prior to the designation of Critical Habitat, that would measure the effects of such a designation on all affected stakeholders – not just on federal agencies – and would include the effects on possible uses of land and property values, employment and revenues available for state and local governments.

Resolution Supporting Ongoing Efforts of Western States to Manage and Conserve The Greater Sage Grouse And In Opposition to an ESA Listing of the Greater Sage Grouse At This Time

**Issue:** Whether the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) should give deference to the efforts of the western states and local governments to manage and conserve the Greater Sage Grouse and recognize those state efforts as adequate enough to forego any Endangered Species Act (ESA) listing of the Greater Sage Grouse as threatened or endangered.

**Adopted Policy:** Ongoing Greater Sage Grouse management efforts of state and local governments, stakeholder, working groups, and Bureau of Land Management (BLM)/U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Resource Management Plans (RMPs) and Land Use Plans throughout the eleven western states are protecting and restoring Greater Sage Grouse habitats and reviving populations. Therefore, NACo opposes listing the Greater Sage Grouse as a Threatened and Endangered (T&E) species at this time. Furthermore, BLM and USFS should give great deference to adequately crafted state and local sage grouse management plans when adopting any federal land use plan amendments, pursuant to the consistency and coordination requirements under federal law.

Resolution Opposing the Listing of the Gunnison Sage Grouse as an Endangered Species, and Opposing the Designation of Critical Habitat without Scientific Basis, such as in Ouray and Hinsdale Counties, Colorado

**Issue:** The proposed USFWS listing of Gunnison Sage Grouse as an endangered species and designation of critical habitat is premature, unwarranted, and without scientific basis and does not take into consideration successful ongoing voluntary efforts to protect and enhance Gunnison Sage Grouse populations and its actual habitat.

**Adopted Policy:** The proposed listing of the Gunnison Sage Grouse as an endangered species and designation of critical habitat is premature, unwarranted, and without scientific basis. Ongoing voluntary efforts of ten Colorado counties and one Utah county where Gunnison Sage Grouse critical habitat has been proposed by USFWS, are adequate to manage, stabilize and restore Gunnison Sage Grouse populations such that a Threatened and Endangered (T&E) listing of this species is unwarranted.

Resolution Supporting Uranium Activities
Issue: On January 9, 2012, the Secretary of the Interior, using faulty information, withdrew one million acres of the nation’s highest grade uranium ores from mineral entry in Northern Arizona.

Adopted Policy: NACo believes that the January 12, 2012 withdrawal for Northern Arizona should be overturned, or revoked, and the lands returned to multiple use status, and under the terms of the 1984 Arizona Wilderness Act, release of lands not suitable for wilderness (except in Coconino County), as long as operators continue to abide by existing state and federal environmental laws, regulations, and standards, including reclamation.

Approved | July 14, 2014

Resolution on the Equal Access to Justice Act


Proposed Policy:

1. Support legislation that Amends the Equal Access to Justice Act and the federal judicial code to require the Chairman of the Administrative Conference of the United States to report to Congress annually on the amount of fees and other expenses awarded to prevailing parties other than the United States in certain administrative proceedings and civil action court cases (excluding tort cases) to which the United States is a party, including settlement agreements.

2. Support requirements that such reports: (1) describe the number, nature, and amount of the awards, the claims involved in the controversy, and any other relevant information that may aid Congress in evaluating the scope and impact of such awards; and (2) be made available to the public online.

3. Support legislation that directs the Chairman of the Administrative Conference of the United States to create and maintain online a searchable database containing specified information with respect to each award including the name of the agency involved, the name of each party to whom the award was made, the amount of the award, and the basis for finding that the position of the agency concerned was not substantially justified.

4. Support legislation that requires the head of each federal agency (including, with respect to court cases, the Attorney General [DOJ] and the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts) to provide the Chairman all information requested to produce such reports.

5. Support raising the EAJA reimbursement level to $200 per hour reflecting the market rate, so that those in need (ie. veterans and small business) and that are “directly and personally harmed” can afford a decent and marketable attorney.

6. Institute a $7,000,000 net worth cap regardless of tax exempt status to reduce the number of lawsuits filed by large nationwide fringe groups that profit from habitual lawsuits.

Approved | July 14, 2014

Resolution Supporting the Government Litigation Savings Act

Issue: Accountability and transparency regarding payments made under the Equal Access to Justice Act (EAJA)

Adopted Policy: NACo supports the Government Litigation Savings Act (S.1061/ H.R.1996) as the passage of these bills would:

- Continue to provide a mechanism to assure fair and equal access to public funds for individuals, small businesses and non-profit organizations with limited financial resources to assure their ability to participate in the justice system of these United States;
- Help restore accountability and transparency on how federal funds are being spent by reestablishing a provision for reporting to Congress on expenditures under the EAJA;
• Restrict the amount of EAJA dollars that can be applied for to reimburse successful individual and small entities for legal expenses in actions brought against the federal government;
• Restrict the eligibility to apply for reimbursement of legal expenses for those individuals and entities without the assets necessary to bring legal action against the federal government; and
• Urge Congress to adopt an asset limit for applicants consistent with the congressional intent of the EAJA.

Approved | July 14, 2014

Resolution on Federal Lands Management Practices

Issue: Federal Lands Management.

Adopted Policy: NACo supports the following changes to federal lands management policy:

1. Support legislation requiring federal lands to be managed in both an ecologically and financially sustainable manner providing a source of revenue to the Federal, State, and Local Governments.
2. Support legislation requiring federal lands to be managed with consideration of the potential costs of remediation after a severe fire event.
3. Support the reorganization of Forest Service management to reduce the layers of organizational structure from four to three. Currently they have the Washington Office, 9 regional offices, Forest Supervisor headquarters, and Ranger District Offices.
4. Support clearly defining the Forest Service mission to get more projects 'boots on the ground' with less administrative distractions.
5. Support legislation for the responsible development of natural resources on federal lands and opening more federal lands for market-based leases.
6. Support requirements that direct Federal Land Management Agencies to utilize all the existing authorities to actively manage their lands according to multiple use principles and that also requires them to account for all projects and methods they have used to the Governor’s Office of each respective state and each County governing body where those federal lands exist.
7. Support requirements that any projects that are stopped by legal action be immediately remedied and turned back out for implementation.

Approved | July 14, 2014

Resolution Supporting Reauthorizing the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act


Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) supports reauthorization of the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act, a balanced approach to western lands that facilitates the sale Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands identified for disposal, which generates revenue for high-priority conservation.

Approved | July 14, 2014

Resolution on Modifying the National Park Service Contingency Plan that Becomes Effective Upon a Lapse in Appropriations from Congress

Issue: Appropriate management scheme for individual National Park Services (NPS) unit in the absence of appropriation.

Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) proposes that each Superintendent of all federal land management agencies, who have the inherent knowledge of his or her own facility and/or area, shall be
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responsible and charged to formulate a plan of operation and identify available funding, in coordination with state and local government, for their unit in the absence of appropriations.

Approved | July 14, 2014

Resolution Supporting Funding for Our National Parks

Issue: Federal funding for the National Park Service (NPS).

Adopted Policy: NACo calls on Congress to preserve funding for America’s national parks. NACo supports maintaining funding for the National Park Service (NPS), recognizing that national parks provide recreation, economic and tourism opportunities for counties, and gateway communities. NACo also urges Congress to increase funding for the NPS to address the dire backlog of maintenance projects, now totaling $11 billion. Potential funding sources include utilizing some eligible, but unfunded off-shore gas and oil lease monies that are dedicated to Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) for support of maintenance and operations for NPS.

Approved | July 14, 2014

Resolution Urging Congress to Establish Community Forest Trust Pilot Programs

Issue: Revenues for counties with U.S. Forest Service (USFS) land.

Adopted Policy: NACo supports the creation of a community forest trust pilot program that:

- Designates specific USFS land, or natural resources on specific USFS land, outside of wilderness designations to be managed by the states on behalf of counties and schools according to state land management practices and federal and state laws as they apply to state land;
- Allocates revenues generated from the management of these designated lands to all forest counties with the participating state using a mutually agreed upon formula;
- Establishes a management board of county commissioners submitted by a state association of counties (or comparable), and appointed by the governor for each participating state; and
- Allows the USFS to maintain ownership and fire management responsibility of the land.

Approved | July 14, 2014

Resolution Urging Greater Consideration of Community Health and Safety

Issue: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service consultation and collaboration with communities adjacent to National Wildlife Refuges and consideration of those community health and safety needs.

Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) urges the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to consult, collaborate and coordinate with counties and other communities adjacent to National Wildlife Refuges when implementing policies that will directly affect their health, safety and welfare and to give the greatest possible deference to their needs.

Approved | July 14, 2014

Resolution Supporting Funding for the Payment in Lieu of Taxes Program

Issue: Long-term funding source for the Payment in Lieu of Taxes Program (PILT).

Adopted Policy: Except for instances in which acquisition of private land may be necessary to comply with provisions of the Endangered Species Act, or acquisitions are supported by the local government of the affected
area, NACo supports designating the use of the Land and Water Conservation Fund as a sustainable source of funding for Payment in Lieu of Taxes, with formula modification that would comply with NACo policy & policy #13 of the Federal Land Management & Policy Act of 1976. NACo further supports full funding of annual LWCF appropriations without reductions to state mineral lease funds, if PILT is fully funded through the LWCF fund.

Approved | July 14, 2014

Resolution on Hazardous Fuels Emergency

**Issue:** Accumulation of biomass on federal lands.

**Adopted Policy:** NACo calls on Congress to grant a Governor the authority to declare a state of emergency when the severity of fire danger from fuels on identified federal lands within that state poses a significant threat to public health and safety.

Approved | July 14, 2014

Resolution Supporting Reintroduction of the Community Forestry Conservation Act of 2011 and the Use of Community Forestry Bonds

**Issue:** Authorizing the use of municipal debt (Community Forestry Bonds) as a tool to help keep working forests in communities across the nation.

**Adopted Policy:** NACo supports the reintroduction and passage of *The Community Forestry Conservation Act of 2011*.

Approved | July 14, 2014

Resolution in Support of Wilderness Legislation with County Input and Support

**Issue:** Supporting multiple uses on all federal and state public lands so that conservation and development of natural resources is balanced with consideration of local needs. The efficient administration, conservation and development of Colorado's natural resources must be balanced with protection of the environment and consideration of local needs.

**Adopted Policy:** NACo supports special land designations of federal lands that are proposed by local residents and businesses, is consistent with existing land use policies, and is strongly supported by the affected counties and stakeholders within which the designation is proposed. NACo strongly encourages congressional delegations to only consider future wilderness legislation with affected counties' support, as exemplified by S. 341, the San Juan Wilderness Act.

Approved | July 14, 2014

Resolution Opposing BLM’s 2012 Decision to Reduce Lands Available for Oil Shale and Tar Sands Leasing

**Issue:** The Bureau of Land Management’s (BLM) 2012 Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS), which greatly reduced the areas approved by BLM in 2008 for oil shale and tar sands leasing programs in Utah, Wyoming and Colorado.

**Adopted Policy:** NACo urges BLM to reverse the 2012 PEIS and approve for oil shale and tar sands leasing all qualifying lands in the Green River Formation.

Approved | July 14, 2014
Resolution Opposing BLM’s Promulgation of Duplicative Hydraulic Fracturing Regulations

Issue: The Bureau of Land Management’s (BLM) intent to adopt duplicative hydraulic fracturing rules.

Adopted Policy: NACo is opposed to a BLM hydraulic fracturing rule that does not clearly and fully defer regulation of hydraulic fracturing to states that already have in place comprehensive regulations.

Approved | July 14, 2014

Resolution to Rescind the BLM’s "Master Leasing Plan" Oil and Gas Leasing Reform

Issue: Rescind the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Master Leasing Plan Instruction Memorandum and Related Guidance.

Adopted Policy: NACo strongly urges that in all cases except where a specific county requests otherwise, the Department of Interior (DOI) Secretary and the BLM Director to immediately rescind BLM Instruction Memorandum No. 2010-117 and all related guidance, because they attempt to implement so-called "Master Leasing Plan" reforms that unlawfully override duly established BLM Resource Management Plans (RMPs) without local government input.

Approved | July 14, 2014

Resolution Urging Congress to Expedite a Commercial Oil Shale Leasing Program

Issue: Oil shale leasing program in the Green River Formation.

Adopted Policy: NACo urges Congress to address in a timely manner, the regulatory review process in order to facilitate a functioning, environmentally responsible commercial oil shale leasing program in the Green River Formation.

Approved | July 14, 2014

Resolution on U.S. Fish and Wildlife Management of the Utah Prairie Dog

Issue: Utah Prairie Dog counts.

Adopted Policy: NACO urges the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to modify policies to permit the counting of Utah Prairie Dogs on private land for the purpose species recovery efforts.

Approved | July 14, 2014

Resolution on Local Law Enforcement on Public Lands

Issue: Local law enforcement on public lands.

Adopted Policy: NACo urges all federal land management agencies to recognize and respect sheriffs (or the chief local law enforcement officer) in public land counties as the primary and chief law enforcement officer of the entire county. Federal agencies should execute cooperative agreements with counties to ensure fair and prompt federal payment of compensation for additional local law enforcement activities desired of sheriffs, and federal agencies submit their agents for deputization and accountability under local sheriff authority and control.

Approved | July 14, 2014

Resolution Supporting Changing Forest Service Employee Supervision
Issue: Chain of command for U.S. Forest Service (USFS) law enforcement personnel.

Adopted Policy: NACo supports a change in USFS personnel organization to place law enforcement officers under the direction of Forest Supervisors.

Approved | July 14, 2014

Resolution Calling for Membership on Landscape Conservation Cooperatives Steering Committees to Include County Elected Officials

Issue: County membership on Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCC).

Adopted Policy: NACo supports the expansion of LCC Steering Committees to include at least one elected county official or approved regional official representing local governmental interests on each Steering Committee, and preferably one from each state in those eco-regions which are multi-state.

Approved | July 14, 2014

Resolution Supporting an Amendment to the Antiquities Act to Require Congressional Approval and NEPA Review Before a Presidential National Monument Proclamation Becomes Effective

Issue: National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review and congressional approval prior to establishment of a national monument.

Adopted Policy: NACo supports Congressional revision of the Antiquities Act of 1906 to require that any Presidential National Monument proclamation seek the approval of affected state and local governments, be subject to NEPA review, and obtain Congressional approval.

Approved | July 14, 2014

Resolution on Acquisition of Private Land for Wildlife Mitigation Associated with Renewable Energy Development with Subsequent Transfer to Federal Agencies

Issue: Acquisition of private land for wildlife mitigation associated with renewable energy development.

Adopted Policy: NACo requests the land and wildlife management agencies adopt procedures that provide for project mitigation other than through land transfer from private to public ownership, unless supported by the affected counties. When such transfers are deemed the only appropriate mitigation, and offsetting the Payment in Lieu of Taxes program (PILT) will not occur, then agencies must provide that project developer would continue to pay the property tax on the transferred land, or fees in lieu of taxes, in perpetuity, unless the land is restored to private ownership at a future date.

Approved | July 14, 2014

Resolution on Mitigation for Historic and Recognized Federal Land Multiple Uses When Renewable Energy Projects are Developed on Federal Land

Issue: Allowing multiple use activities on federal lands.

Adopted Policy: NACo requests that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) adopt policies that provide real and substantial consideration of historic uses in the project plans and environmental documentation, and require project developers to provide mitigation for their loss.
Resolution Supporting Third Party Recreational Concessionaires in County Parks on Bureau of Land Management Land

Issue: The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) believes it does not have statutory authority to allow third party concessionaires to provide recreational opportunities such as camp grounds, horseback riding, and golf courses on BLM land leased or patented to counties.

Adopted Policy: NACo urges the strengthening of recreational opportunities and the resulting economic benefits through public-private partnerships on all public lands.

Approved | July 14, 2014